

Amiga Revisited

After a couple years of neglect, I decided to breathe some new life into my trusted A1200. The problem started with the 2.5" 540Mg Hd dying and causing all sorts of problems with my machine. In my anger, I mashed down the A1200 hard enough to knock off a chip from the memory simm. Bad news because I could never get another 72pin simm to work. The accelerator is the excellent Microbotics 1230XA with a 50mhz '030 and '82. This tasty bit will address up to 128m with one socket and allows setting of memory speed through software. Sweet, since I was able to clock the 8m 70ns simm I had at 50ns stably for a decade. The extra 15% boost was noticable. Alas, no drive or memory (no memory, no accelerator). I put the machine aside since I was able to assemble an Amithlon system. I have nothing but the highest regards for the Amithlon setup: stable, fast as any pc, and Amiga DOS 3.9. Awsome! With a 2.5" to 3.5" adaptor, I was able to save everything of value on my 2.5" drive and get those programs on the disk working on Amithlon.

That was the past. As much as I love Amithlon, I've been hankerin' to get my A1200 back. Time and opportunity presented itself when I hosed the drive on PC. (Important side note: I believe I did it when I was trying to talk to my SCSI scanner. Amithlon, being an emulator, doesn't have protections a modern OS has. Trying to talk to

the scanner through 1, 2, 3, or whatever xamithlon.device, the driver did a low level write to the HD and nuked windows, linux, amithlon, BeOS, QNX, and all my files. Be very careful!) I purchased 3.1 roms and AmigaOS 3.5 about 6 years ago but never Installed them since my machine hummed along perfectly. I also had an 8g 2.5 HD that would be just sweet for a 1200. So it was time to get to work.

Cheating

Taking the path of least resistance, I decided to get on the PC, boot off the Amithlon CD and install all the files on the 2.5. I was not in the mood to try booting the 1200 off floppies and install my SCSIplus drivers so I could attach a SCSI CD and do the install off an old slow SCSI CD. Amithlon did a wonderful job partitioning and formatting my HD and installing the OS. Even though I knew better, I tried the Amithlon 3.9 install which proved fruitless. A later install of Amiga OS 3.9 did the job (Many Thanks Chris!). My next problem was a machine that did not fully boot and had strange errors. That proved to be from the fact that I was 4 megs short of the 6 megs I needed to boot 3.9. The puzzler was that I had Phil's 8meg ram card in it. The combination of the tight fit of the A1200 and plastic simm holders led to broken plastic simm holders and no ram. Hot glue held things tight and we finally booted into 3.9 glory. My next concern was getting my Microbotics accelerator up and running. I was a little concerned since I had to run a patch first to use the board before. Ed mentioned

that the 3.1 roms were fully accelerator aware and would mount them. This proved to be the case and it flawlessly booted up! This was great since it also meant that it recognized the first simm I put in it. A few other simms worked well but did not use the extra memory above the original 8 megs. I still have to run the SetXA program to tell the card about the ram. My next concern was getting the SCSI set up so I can use a CD and load up more programs and Aminet stuff. I do have to run a patch to recognize the Scsiplus (little hardware hack that mounts on the IDE connector and passes SCSI commands to a connector in back, then to a SCSI device.). I was simply amazed that I was able to find the original install disk right off. It was nice to have some docs and the original install scripts. Few loading options were available but I know that I told it to add Zip drivers. So I did a reboot and nothing, black screen, zilch! An hour of playing with startup scripts and reboots revealed that the machine was loading drivers for devices that did not exist and it didn't like that. Moving the Zip icon from dosdrivers to storage/dosdrivers solved the problem.

Now What?

My A1200 now has AmigaDOS 3.9, 4 times more memory, 16 times more storage, and a good accelerator! SWEET! I will be fine-tuning it again to get that last bit of speed. There are a few factors to be dealt with: proper use of disk partitions, working out the SCSIplus and all those SCSI/unit

id/termination issues, but the best part is that I have my old friend back. I'll be bringing the machine in to get help working out bugs. Most important, there has been a lot of interest at the meetings in pcmcia card ethernet/wireless stuff. Now I have a reference platform with the nessessary TCP/IP stack, web browser, and other net junk, we can seriously see if we can tackle that stuff.

Now, where did I put those case screws in 2001 ?

*by James Lawrence
from the AmiTech-Dayton Gazette, March 2005*

Amiga Passings

Redmond A. Simonsen, co-founder of Microbotics, passed away in March.

John Frederick Zacharias passed away in February. John was past president of the Sacramento Amiga Computer Club (SACC) and originator of AMIWest, the annual west coast conference for the Amiga Computer.

AmigaMCCC News

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April Calendar

*April 25 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:00 pm — Grand Prairie Public Library
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie*

*April 25 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 9:30 pm — Location TBD*

April 30 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

Not That Bright...

These are actual questions asked of park rangers in Banff National Park, Canada.

- *At what elevation does an elk become a moose?*
- *Is there anywhere I can see the bears pose?*
- *Is it okay to keep an open bag of bacon on the picnic table, or should I store it in my tent?*